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ABSTRACT

This collection of abstracts is part of a continuing series providing information on recent doctoral dissertations. The 17 titles deal with a variety of topics, including the following: (1) the impact of cognitive development upon audience awareness in the writing process, (2) a theory of college composition and academic prose, (3) public perceptions of student writing ability, (4) cohesion as a teachable measure of writing competence, (5) writing anxiety among high school students, (6) an analysis of effective expository prose, (7) syntactic and vocabulary development in the written discourse of learning disabled and normal children and adolescents, (8) the effects of intended audience and feedback on the writings of middle grade pupils, (9) the quality of essays written for distant and intimate audiences by high and low apprehensive two-year college freshmen, (10) intellectual strategies used in composing, (11) six journeys through the writing process, (12) the relationship between reading response and syntactic writing maturity, (13) the effect of written dialogue and the location of the deep subject on the reading comprehension of seven- and nine-year-old children, (14) a sequential instructional development model applied to the area of written composition, (15) the effect of maturity and discourse type on the written syntax, and (16) cohesion in ESL students' expository writing. (MKM)

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Written Language and Writing Abilities:

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Brodkey, Linda Chapman
TOWARD A THEORY OF COLLEGE COMPOSITION AND ACADEMIC PROSE: THE ROLE OF DEIXIS

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THE EFFECT OF PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT ON THE WRITING SKILLS AND ATTITUDES OF SECONDARY STUDENTS

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THE IMPACT OF COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT UPON AUDIENCE AWARENESS IN THE WRITING PROCESS

Order No. 8017201

BATOR, PAUL GREGORY, A.D. *The University of Michigan*, 1980. 144pp. Co-chairmen: Alan B. Howes, Charles F. Keen

The central question this study examines is "How does the writer give body to the audience for whom he writes?" The study discusses the impact of cognitive development upon the writer's ability to analyze his or her audience for writing. The study finds that theories of cognitive development hold specific theoretical and pedagogical implications for the writing process.

Chapter I discusses the concept of audience, noting its place in the rhetorical theories of Aristotle, Ong, Booth, Britton and others. It also exposes certain theoretical connections between cognitive developmental psychology and audience awareness in the writing process.

Chapter II explicates Jean Piaget's and Lev Vygotsky's concepts of cognitive egocentrism. The explication emphasizes the manifestations of cognitive egocentrism during each stage of Piaget's developmental theory in an attempt to clarify Piaget's original intentions for the concept. This chapter also examines Vygotsky's critique of Piaget's theory and Piaget's response to Vygotsky.

Chapter III discusses the theoretical and pedagogical implications for the writing process of Piaget's and Vygotsky's theories. A critical theoretical implication is that the transformation of thought from inner speech to writing does not follow a linear pattern and is a complex cognitive activity even for adults. Another significant theoretical implication is that the process of making inferences about another and demonstrating such inferential skill in writing is a process involving four stages: Existence, Need, Inference, and Application. One of the key implications for pedagogy in the writing process is that students can profit from a structured method for determining and analyzing their writing audience.

Chapter IV surveys current composition textbooks for advice on audience analysis. The survey finds that since 1970, texts have given more attention to the audience component of the writing process, but few texts actually provide students with a heuristic for audience analysis. The survey also presents texts in areas outside of freshman composition which discuss audience analysis: technical writing, interpersonal communications, and speech.

Chapter V describes an experimental study which applies Young, Becker, and Pike's tagmemic heuristic to audience analysis. Students in an experimental class section of freshman composition were trained in the use of the tagmemic heuristic for audience analysis. The writing of these students, on a specified writing task, was compared with the writing of students from a control section. The results indicated that the tagmemic heuristic is a particularly effective procedure for audience analysis and can improve the quality of a student's writing.

The Conclusion presents an "Audience-Based Model of the Writing Process," a model emphasizing the network of relationships which exist between the writer and the audience. The cyclical design of the Model highlights the recursive nature of the writing process and focuses attention upon the audience as a critical factor in all stages of writing--invention, arrangement, revision, and editing.

TOWARD A THEORY OF COLLEGE COMPOSITION AND ACADEMIC PROSE: THE ROLE OF DEIXIS Order No. 8025024

BRODKEY, LINDA CHAPMAN, PH.D. *The University of New Mexico*, 1980. 174pp.

Research in college composition traditionally attempts to solve writing problems at the level of pedagogy, either by comparing teaching methods or producing teaching materials. Although questions of what to teach in college writing classes are undoubtedly important, solutions are not likely to be found if we confine our research to pedagogy. What is known about writing is largely intuitive and implicit. Thus, what is needed most from composition research is an explicit theory to account for a teacher's implicit knowledge, which can distinguish good writing from bad but cannot formally explain the differences between an acceptable and unacceptable college essay.

The teacher's knowledge cannot be described in the generative model of linguistic competence, which focuses exclusively on the ability to distinguish grammatical from ungrammatical sentences. The teacher's knowledge of writing supersedes grammatical competence; the knowledge which recognizes successful college writing must include, at the very least, knowledge of academic values and the means for expressing those values in writing. To express academic values in writing is to know how to use language for a purpose, which is the primary concern of contemporary pragmatic language theories.

Analysis of published academic prose, using information derived from pragmatic language theories, reveals that writers systematically recommend themselves to readers in the preliminaries of the text, and then verify and modify the preliminary recommendations in the text itself. The process through which academic writers display their academic credentials is identifiably deictic, for writers coordinate their intellectual and academic achievements with the values of the academic community by establishing a system in which the writer's efforts are identified with the community's beliefs.

Successful student essays also display a knowledge of academic deixis. In a pilot study, using 36 freshman argumentative essays and 14 grading variables, multiple regression analysis indicates that a matrix of four interrelated variables accounts for 83 percent of the teacher's grade. The matrix is interpreted as a set of deictic functions: Student to Teacher, Student to Subject Matter, Student to Academic Community, and Subject Matter to Academic Community. It is observed that a successful student essay must coordinate all four deictic relations and that the reader's evaluation relies almost entirely on a satisfactory rendering of the deictic matrix.

Theory of academic writing begins with a description of deixis in academic prose and in student writing. A comprehensive theory of academic writing would, however, require an ethnography of the academic community, for the values the deictics refer to must be identified and described. Subsequently, writing teachers can make academic values and their deictic expression in student writing an explicit component in theory of college composition pedagogy.

THE EFFECT OF PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT ON THE WRITING SKILLS AND ATTITUDES OF SECONDARY STUDENTS Order No. 8025042

CAROSELLI, MARLENE, ED.D. *The University of Rochester*, 1980. 190pp.

Since the advent of the Coleman report in 1966, educators have become increasingly aware of the importance of the home environment upon a child's ability to learn. Subsequent studies have repeatedly demonstrated that the schools alone cannot offset the effect which socio-economic inequalities have upon a child's scholastic achievement.

Certain of these inequalities or variables related to a child's success in school are fairly stable factors: the level of education attained by parents, the family income, the number of adults in the home, and parental occupations, for example. However, there are other variables within the home environment which can be influenced or altered more readily. This second type of variable is more social than economic in nature and involves a process or interaction which occurs between parent and child. Examples of such process variables, which can also have a powerful effect on children's learning, are the amount of time a parent spends talking with the child, the extent of parental involvement with the school, the number of times the parent engages the child in school-related activities, et cetera.

This study dealt with the implementation of certain process variables which occur as parents and children work together at home. The purpose of the study was to determine the effect of parental involvement upon the writing skills and attitudes of secondary students. The subjects in both the experimental and the contrast groups were eleventh grade students and the parents of those students.

While the null hypothesis was accepted for the proposition that parental intervention would result in improved writing skills, it was shown that the treatment had a significant effect on the student with low standardized test scores. When presented with sufficient opportunity to learn, this type of student did more assignments and achieved more gain than his counterpart with higher standardized test scores. It was also shown that this type of student, who had both poor achievement and poor attendance records, was able to profit from instruction provided in the context of the home.

In reference to the hypothesis that such an intervention strategy would result in improved student attitudes, the student with low standardized achievement test scores again underwent the greatest gain. Further evidence of the effect of parental involvement upon the attitudes of the low-achieving student was found in the negative correlation between pre-writing scores and post-attitudinal test scores. It would seem that a facilitative intervention approach, although it has no significant impact upon a group of heterogeneously-grouped students, does have a positive effect on the student typically recognized as a poor achiever.

Finally, the data pertaining to the hypothesis that an intervention process would improve parental attitudes revealed that parents, regardless of their attitudes toward schooling, are willing to assist their children with academic tasks. Furthermore, the change which was apparent in the attitudes of parents affords hope that such academic tasks can serve as a common activity for family members.

PUBLIC PERCEPTIONS OF STUDENT WRITING ABILITY: ABSTRACTIONS AND REALITIES Order No. 8022009

CROW, HENRY JAMES, PH.D. *The University of Iowa*, 1980. 147pp. Supervisor: Professor G. Robert Carlsen

The purpose of this study is to examine a frequently reported perception that the writing ability of young people has seriously declined and to explore the lay person's attitudes, opinions, and expectations regarding student writing.

Individual one-hour interviews, using a nineteen-question interview instrument, explored these issues with thirty lay people in a large urban/suburban school district. In the course of the interview, the subjects also read, rated, and discussed three short papers written by seventh grade students. The study analyzes subjects' responses to direct questions about such matters as their perception of the general quality of student writing and their definitions of good writing, as well as their ratings of the writing samples and application of their criteria of good writing.

The study reports the following findings: (1) While subjects had widely varying opinions about the quality of student writing, most were satisfied that schools are doing a reasonably good job in teaching students to write, especially in the local school district, and especially at the elementary level. (2) Subjects' opinions about student writing were based on impressions from the school work of their own children and of acquaintances, and on newspaper, magazine, radio and television reports. Few had extensive first-hand familiarity with actual student writing. (3) Subjects stated a total of sixteen criteria of good writing in response to two direct questions. Some correctness features seemed to become more important in the list of criteria at the end of the interview, after discussion of the writing samples. References to sentence structure and correct grammar were not clearly defined in most cases. (4) Subjects perceived differences in quality among the three writing samples and generally agreed on the ranking of them. The lowest rated paper met or nearly met most subjects' expectations for seventh grade writers, and the other two papers exceeded their expectations. The writing samples had a positive effect on most subjects' feelings about student writing ability. (5) Subjects mentioned most of the same criteria in response to writing samples that they mentioned when directly defining good writing. However, the evaluative ratings of the papers were affected largely by the writer's skill with surface features (spelling, punctuation, capitalization, and paragraph division) and by two features not mentioned elsewhere: the writer's attitude toward the person being written about, and the writer's insight or sensitivity regarding personal relationships. (6) Although most subjects accurately characterized a paper with numerous errors in spelling and punctuation and with effective description and originality, they failed to recognize some mature syntactic features that it contained. Their criticisms of its sentence structure apparently referred only to the existence of several run-off sentences. (7) All of the subjects considered writing ability important for all or most high school graduates, and emphasized the importance of functional writing. (8) Most of the subjects considered themselves average or above average writers when in school and at the present time. Most of the writing they do is functional.

The final chapter of the study summarizes the above findings and suggests implications for teachers and school officials, particularly as related to their responsibility to define clearly what constitutes good writing and to design writing instruction that nourishes the development of writing ability, recognizing that, in addition to its transactional functions, writing has value in establishing personal contact between the writer and the reader.

COHESION AS A TEACHABLE MEASURE OF WRITING COMPETENCE Order No. 8026168

HARTNETT, CAROLYN GREEN, PH.D. *Indiana University of Pennsylvania*, 1980. 124pp. Chair: Patrick Hartwell

Certain words relate one sentence to another; they make a text cohesive. Examples include pronouns, comparatives, conjunctions, repeated content words, synonyms, and higher level classifications. These words, called ties, express the writer's mental processes.

Cognitive psychology begins the list of mental processes with perception, attention, and pattern recognition, which lead to classification and definition, through comparison and contrast. The more advanced intellectual processes combine basic computer-like operations. Those processes parallel the traditional rhetorical forms of communication. This resemblance of rhetorical forms to mental processes that are expressed in cohesive ties suggests that using the forms and ties requires performing the intellectual processes.

Teaching has traditionally included the mechanics of the ties, their grammar and punctuation. When instruction on the ties includes their meaning also, then it can teach the mental processes which the forms communicate. Students not yet practicing the intellectual processes could thus learn the methods of manipulating ideas. As they perform the cognitive processes using the linguistic forms to relate content, they are inventing ideas for sentences, paragraphs, and compositions. Thus teaching cohesive ties fully will teach the intellectual skills of thinking in writing. For accountability, an objective count of the variety of properly-used cohesive ties could serve as a measure for diagnosis and assessment. The ties may be a short-cut to improvement in student writing.

The purpose of this research was to explore writing improvement when basic writing classes study (1) the mental process, (2) the meaning, (3) the mechanics, and (4) the rhetorical applications of cohesive ties.

The experimenter prepared materials for two instructors to teach such a course after they had taught the course in their usual manner as controls.

The experimental group was all the Spring, 1980, sections of a basic writing course at College of the Mainland. The control group was the Fall, 1979, sections of the same course. Pretests and posttests were timed essays on four matched topics in two modes, persuasive and expository. Trained teachers not acquainted with the experiment evaluated the overall quality of the essays, holistically. Other trained raters tabulated the types of cohesive ties in each essay.

Statistics reported include correlation of holistic score and number of types of cohesive ties, analysis of variance of difference scores on the holistic measure and on the types of cohesive ties for both modes, and comparison of instructors, counting both experimental and control students.

Results show that the number of types of cohesive ties that students used did correlate positively with writing competence as shown in the holistic score. Persuasive writings did not contain significantly more types of cohesive ties than expository assignments had. Students in the one experimental group that received the complete treatment as planned did gain significantly more than the control group in both types of ties used and in holistic score.

A STUDY OF WRITING ANXIETY AMONG HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS INCLUDING CASE HISTORIES OF THREE HIGH AND THREE LOW ANXIETY STUDENTS Order No. 8015204

HEATON, HELEN FIELD, PH.D. *The University of Wisconsin - Madison*, 1980. 210pp. Supervisor: Professor John M. Kean

This study measured the level, distribution, and causes of writing anxiety and the relationship to writing quality in a small, rural high school population.

A test of writing anxiety and a writing autobiography were completed by all students grades nine through twelve. Three writing samples were collected from all twelfth graders and correlated with their writing anxiety scores. From this data, three high and three low anxiety students were selected for detailed case studies. These students, their parents, and their teachers were interviewed. The case studies include information on achievement of the student, parent attitudes toward writing and school achievement, and teachers' assessment of student writing ability. Students listed their own writing strengths and weaknesses and evaluated the quality of other student writing.

The results showed that the Writing Anxiety Test (WAT) mean score of 79.66 found in this population was slightly higher than the mean score of college undergraduates and equal to adult mean scores. Tenth and eleventh graders' anxiety levels were slightly above those of ninth and twelfth graders' levels. Twice as many boys as girls showed high writing anxiety, and half as many boys showed low writing anxiety. Sixty-five percent of males and the same number of females showed medium anxiety.

Eleventh graders' WAT scores and ratings on three writing samples showed no statistically significant correlation between anxiety level and writing quality. A post hoc correlation of WAT scores, writing sample ratings, word count, and sex was statistically significant.

Analysis of the students' writing autobiographies showed that the most prevalent causes of positive or negative feelings about writing were (1) teachers' writing assignments (occasion and time allowed, choice of and interest in subject), (2) lack of composition skills (clarity of expression, thinking of ideas, practice and instruction), and (3) teachers' grades and comments.

Case history data revealed that not all students fit the predictable patterns of high anxiety/low standardized test scores/low school achievement or low anxiety/high standardized test scores/high school achievement. Neither high nor low anxiety students necessarily seek needed help from teachers. The data also showed that teachers and parents strongly influence students' writing attitudes. Implications for teaching writing in order to develop positive attitudes and ability are to provide time for practice, assistance during writing, praise for success, and specific instruction to improve individual students' writing.

COHESION IN ESL STUDENTS' EXPOSITORY WRITING: A DESCRIPTIVE STUDY

Order No. 8017509

LIEBER, PAULA ELLEN, PH.D. *New York University*, 1980. 331pp.
Chairperson: Professor Harvey Nadler

For students of English as a second language (ESL) learning to write expository essays, a major stumbling block is often the use of cohesion, the set of grammatical and lexical devices signaling the meaning of relationships and the links between individual segments of a text. The objective of this study was to investigate the ways in which ESL students in a pre-freshman composition course use cohesive devices to link segments of text which function significantly in the development of their expository essays, and to specify the problems they still have in the use of these devices.

For segmenting the essays, a new analytic unit was developed: the functional unit of discourse, or F-unit, comprising the set of clauses and clause equivalents serving an identifiable rhetorical function in written discourse. Objective linguistic criteria used to characterize the F-units differentiate them from similar structures providing restrictive modification or filling an essential syntactic slot in a matrix clause, which do not qualify as F-units. For identification of the cohesive devices, the outline of cohesion in English presented by Halliday and Hasan (1976) was modified to include all devices providing ties between F-units, including items which function intra-sententially. Five major categories of devices, each with several subcategories, were used: reference, substitution, ellipsis, conjunction, and lexical cohesion.

Five sets of essays, written during a 14-week semester, were analyzed. The essays were segmented into F-units; the cohesive devices, together with their referents appearing in the text, were then identified. In order to check the suitability of any conjunctive devices, the functional role played by each F-unit was identified. Finally, the grammatical and semantic errors in cohesion were identified and grouped according to error type. This error analysis specified the major problems in the use of cohesive devices and provided a tentative identification of some causes for the errors.

Findings of the Study. Although the compositions were written over a 14-week period, there was little change in the relative degree to which devices from the different categories and subcategories were used to achieve overall cohesion. The students relied most heavily on lexical devices. They also used a considerable number of reference items--particularly pronominals and demonstratives--and, to a lesser extent, conjunctions. Ellipsis and particularly substitution served only a minor role in cohesion.

Errors were most common in all types of reference devices and in adverbial conjunctions, although there were also errors in the other types of devices. The most frequent type of error was the use of a device with no identifiable referent in the text. Other major error types included the substitution of an inappropriate item for a required cohesive device, problems in number agreement, and the use of devices with ambiguous referents.

Certain patterns in the use of the devices and in the cohesive errors can be explained by differences in the time available for writing and/or any prior preparation for the essays, transfer of or interference from native-language forms, overgeneralization of the use of familiar items, and the influence of teaching procedures and the presentation of material in the students' text.

In the analysis, the F-unit proved to be a flexible research tool for objectively isolating the rhetorically significant units in the essays and for dealing with the occasionally nonstandard sentence and clause structures found in ESL writing.

AN ANALYSIS OF EFFECTIVE EXPOSITORY PROSE: INSTRUCTION AND SELF-ASSESSMENT FOR WRITERS

Order No. 8019207

MINNIS, MICHELE, PH.D. *University of Kansas*, 1979. 74pp.

Expository writing, like reinforcement, may be defined by its effect: writing is "expository" when it clarifies for a reader the relationships obtaining between events of some kind. Readers are sometimes called upon to demonstrate by their behavior that a written communication had indeed served a clarifying function. More often, the reader's rejoinder occurs as an approving response to the written statements.

The objective of the present investigation was to identify and teach the functional constituents of expository writing--the composing behaviors that elicit approving responses from readers. A specific assignment, the Written Comprehensive Exam, was selected for study. Doctoral students in Kansas University's Department of Human Development and Family Life are required to write answers to six comprehensive (comp) questions pertaining to research in applied behavior analysis. The answers, limited to seven typewritten pages each, are rated on several dimensions and graded in a blind review by two faculty members. If the reviewers do not agree that an answer is either "acceptable" (A) or "not acceptable" (NA), a third reviewer breaks the tie.

After interviewing ten faculty members concerning their expectations as reviewers of Written Comprehensive Exams, the author designed an evaluation procedure for comp answers based on the model advanced by Van Nostrand et al. (*Functional Writing*, 1978). The author used this procedure to assess 31 comp answers previously reviewed by two faculty graders, both of whom had been in agreement about each answer's acceptability or unacceptability. It was found that answers that (1) addressed all parts of the question and included: (2) discrete subtopic discussions, (3) linking assertions between discussions, and (4) a conclusion statement, were more than twice as likely to be graded "acceptable" as answers lacking these characteristics.

Relying on this preliminary assessment, the author tutored two graduate students who were rewriting comp answers that had been judged NA, then offered a formal course in "How to compose acceptable written comprehensives." Nine doctoral students enrolled in the course on the recommendation of their advisors.

The rating dimensions on the comp reviewers' evaluation forms were closely congruent with the objectives of the writing course. It was expected that, if both the analysis and instruction had been appropriately conducted, the answers written following course participation would score well on these dimensions.

Class exercises, based on strategies described in *Functional Writing*, centered on (1) *preparing to compose an answer*: analyzing the question to determine precisely what it was asking; collecting and displaying, in a table, empirical data relevant to the question; writing statements summarizing each pattern of evidence so revealed; ordering the statements to form an argument for a particular conclusion; and (2) *composing an answer:* introducing the reader to the issue(s) addressed by the question and forecasting the argument in the opening lines of the answer; systematically elaborating the forecast in constructing the argument; recapitulating the argument before stating the conclusion.

Nine answers completed following either tutoring or course instruction were submitted for official faculty grading. Six of these answers were rewritten versions of answers that had failed to pass. All six revised answers were awarded two A grades. Combined ratings of the post-instruction, revised answers were significantly higher ($P < 0.01$) than combined ratings of the original, pre-instruction versions. The three other answers had been written for the first time during the course. Two passed with strongly favorable ratings, one received two NA grades and below average ratings.

The almost uniformly positive rating outcomes indicated that the post-instruction answers exhibited the properties here designated as critical to effective exposition, and that these properties served to clarify, to the reviewers' satisfaction, the unknown or ambiguous relationships that were the subjects of inquiry. These findings suggest that functional components of the complex skill, expository writing, can be identified and taught.

SYNTACTIC AND VOCABULARY DEVELOPMENT IN THE WRITTEN DISCOURSE OF LEARNING DISABLED AND NORMAL CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS

Order No. 8015581

MORRIS, NANCY THOMAS, ED.D. *The University of Alabama*, 1979. 148pp.

One of the major goals of education is the production of mature written discourse. Research in language development has been restricted by the rather sizeable corpora necessary for objective analysis and the lack of efficient quantification techniques. However, more frequent efforts have been made in the last decade to measure syntactic and vocabulary growth. The major question has been how the manipulation of syntax and vocabulary relates to the characteristics of language maturity.

Poor facility in the expression of thought through written language probably is the most prevalent disability of the communication skills. Several studies suggest that 75% to 85% of learning disabled children have language processing problems which relate significantly to academic achievement and to written syntax. Many learning disabled children who later develop language deficits acquire a large vocabulary with ease. This vocabulary facility often camouflages specific problems in language processing and in oral language formation and production.

Research dealing with the development of written language has been limited. A literature search turned up no studies of the syntactic and vocabulary abilities of learning disabled children as reflected in written expression. Since the language of the learning disabled child often is deficient only at the level of written expression, research is needed in this area.

The purpose of this study was to compare the written language development of learning disabled and normal students on indices of syntactic and vocabulary development. Seventy-two normal students were included in four age groups that ranged from 9 to 15 years of age. Eighteen learning disabled and eighteen normal students at each age level were matched for school and grade placement, chronological age within 60 days, and IQ within 10 points.

A film without narration was used as the stimulus for written language samples. Written passages were analyzed using the computer program developed by Lester Golub and Carolyn Kidder. Language samples were analyzed for the following measures of syntax: (a) length of passage, (b) number of T-units, (c) length of T-unit, (d) Syntactic Density Score, and (e) corrected Syntactic Density Score. Vocabulary measures included: (a) number of word types, (b) simple type/token ratio, (c) corrected type/token ratio, and (d) Vocabulary Intensity Index.

Data for each variable were analyzed by a two-way analysis of variance design, and tests for trend analysis were employed whenever significant main effects for age were observed.

The major findings of this study were: (1) At each age level, for most measures of syntactic development, there was a difference that consistently indicated more syntactic maturity in the normal students as compared with learning disabled students. (2) Most measures of syntactic development increased across age for both learning disabled and normal students. (3) In no case was there an interaction between age level and group. The developmental trends were found to be parallel for learning disabled and normal students. (4) For vocabulary development, the developmental increases were not as marked as they were for measures of syntactic development. (5) Some of the measures of vocabulary indicated developmental changes in vocabulary development for both normal and learning disabled students. (6) The measures that showed any differences between learning disabled and normal students consistently found normal students to have greater vocabulary development. (7) Whenever there was a developmental change in a measure of vocabulary development, the decrement of those changes were the same in both normal and learning disabled students.

THE EFFECTS OF INTENDED AUDIENCE AND FEEDBACK ON THE WRITINGS OF MIDDLE GRADE PUPILS Order No. 8020379

PRENTICE, WALTER COYTE, PH.D. *The University of North Dakota*, 1980. 126pp. Adviser: Professor Ruth Gallant

The present study investigated the development of written communication skills of students in the middle elementary grades. Two aspects of communicative competence served as the focus: (1) the ability to modify writing to fit the needs of the intended audience, and (2) the ability to profit from reader feedback. In addition, the effect of the writing stimulus on students' performance was examined.

Thirty-six students, 12 in each of grades 3, 5, and 7, served as subjects. The students were shown one of two stimulus drawings, either a simple line drawing of a tree, hill, house, and sun (the Scene Stimulus), or a drawing composed of four geometric shapes (the Geometric Array Stimulus). The students were instructed to describe the stimulus drawing in writing so that a given audience could make an accurate reproduction of it. Each student wrote descriptions for both a first grade and an adult reader. Two descriptions were written for each reader, one before and one after receiving feedback. The feedback was the actual drawing produced by the reader. Additional data were obtained by observing the students in the process of writing and by conducting postwriting interviews with each student. The descriptions were scored for sentence length, vocabulary difficulty, and amount of information contained in the description.

Sentence length did not vary significantly as a function of the intended reader at any grade level. Students in grade 7 simplified the vocabulary in descriptions written for the first grade audience. Students at each grade level provided more information for the adult than for the first grade readers, and increased significantly the amount of information in their descriptions after receiving reader feedback. The ability to profit from reader feedback was affected by the nature of the stimulus drawing, the third grade students having particular difficulty improving their descriptions of the Geometric Array Stimulus.

The ability to communicate effectively in writing does appear to develop across the middle elementary grades. Even students in grade 3 made choices in their writing which took into account the communicative needs of the intended reader. A final conclusion drawn from the results of the study was that writing performance cannot be accurately assessed without considering the intended audience, the cognitive demands of the writing task, the nature of the feedback, and the purpose for writing.

THE QUALITY OF ESSAYS WRITTEN FOR DISTANT AND INTIMATE AUDIENCES BY HIGH AND LOW APPREHENSIVE TWO-YEAR COLLEGE FRESHMEN Order No. 8021064

RICHARDSON, EDGAR MORRISON, ED.D. *University of Cincinnati*, 1980. 53pp.

Concern over the quality of student writing has prompted many studies investigating factors responsible for that quality--either high or low. One such factor is apprehension. Another factor is the writer's audience.

This is a study determining the relationship between apprehension and the quality of student writing when it is aimed toward different audiences, one intimate and one distant from the writer.

The 21 students included in the study were derived from a pool of 58 second term Freshman English students in a two-year, general and technical, open-admissions college on the campus of a major mid-western urban university. They took the Daly-Miller Writing Apprehension Test (WAT). Thirteen of the students who scored one-half standard deviation above the mean were classified as high apprehensive; eight who scored one-half standard deviation below the mean were classified as low apprehensive. They were asked to write two essays, the first one to a distant audience and the second one to an intimate audience. The essays were then read by two readers for the quality of writing.

The quality of writing had two components: Syntactic Maturity Scores (words per T-Unit), and Coherence Scores, as defined by Winterowd in "The Grammar of Coherence." The readers did an actual word count for syntactic maturity and rated coherence on a scale of 2 - 10. The data were then analyzed by being subjected to a multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA).

The four hypothesis tested in this study, and the findings of each are as follows: (1) There will be substantial differences in the overall quality of writing among high and low apprehensives, as measured by the Daly-Miller WAT scores. This hypothesis was not accepted. (2) In an essay aimed at an intimate audience there will be substantial differences in the quality of student writing between low apprehensive writers and high apprehensive writers, as measured by the WAT scores. This hypothesis was not accepted. (3) In an essay aimed at a distant audience there will be substantial differences in the quality of student writing between low apprehensive writers and high apprehensive writers, as measured by the WAT scores. This hypothesis was not accepted. (4) The quality of student writing in an essay aimed at an intimate audience will vary substantially from the quality of student writing in an essay aimed at a distant audience. This hypothesis was accepted.

The syntactic maturity scores for the essays written for the distant audience were significantly ($< .05$) higher than those for the essays written for the intimate audience. The coherence scores were significantly ($< .05$) lower for the essays written for the distant audience than those for the essays written for the intimate audience.

The conclusion of this study is that the degree of audience distance has an effect on the quality of student writing, as measured by Syntactic Maturity and Coherence. This study indicates the need for further research concerning the reasons for these effects.

INTELLECTUAL STRATEGIES USED IN COMPOSING: AN ANALYSIS OF INTELLECTUAL PROCESSES REFLECTED IN FICTIONAL BIOGRAPHY WRITTEN BY HIGH AND LOW ACHIEVERS OF GRADES IX AND XII Order No. 8021165

SAGE, SELWYN FITZ-STANLEY, ED.D. *State University of New York at Buffalo*, 1980. 103pp. Chairman: Camillus Lee Odell

Research indicates that composition programs that cause students to use specific thinking strategies can have a significant effect on student writing. Such programs can be made more relevant, however, if they are based on knowledge of the characteristic modes of thinking employed by students when writing. This study was intended to determine whether students of different ages and different levels of achievement think differently when writing fictional biography. The modes of thinking investigated are intellectual strategies derived from Pike's Tagmemic Theory. These intellectual strategies are focus, contrast, classification, reference to change, reference to physical context, and reference to sequence. The study sought to answer the following questions: Are the six intellectual strategies used differently in fictional biography by the groups in each of the following pairs: (1) high and low achievers of Grade IX (2) high and low achievers of Grade XII (3) high achievers of Grades IX and XII (4) low achievers of Grades IX and XII?

The study assumes that the surface features of the written products reflect some of a writer's thought processes. The use of the intellectual strategies are therefore determined by analysis of written compositions.

Subjects were chosen from Confederation Secondary School of Sudbury. The student population of about 900 is divided into four streams or levels, on the basis of academic achievement. Level I is the lowest stream, and Level IV the highest. Twenty-two students were randomly selected from level II and from the forty best students in English of Level IV, in each of the Grades IX and XII.

Subjects responded to the same topics, in the same mode and type of discourse, fictional biography. They were required to write three short stories, pre-writing and re-writing in class, at intervals of at least one week.

Each intellectual strategy was divided into a number of subcategories, each different subcategory being a different way of using a relevant intellectual strategy. Differences in the use of an intellectual strategy were determined by difference in frequency-occurrence of subcategories A *t* test was carried out to determine differences between means of the groups compared at .05 level of significance. Means were calculated as the mean average percentage of clauses that contained a variable.

The differences between the groups varied. Between the high and low achievers of Grade XII there were significant differences in the frequency-occurrence of fifteen subcategories. These differences with respect to the subcategories represent differences in use of all six intellectual strategies. Between the high and low achievers of Grade IX, significant differences occurred in frequency of five subcategories, which represents a difference in use of three intellectual strategies: classification, reference to change, and reference to sequence. The high achievers of Grades IX and XII showed significant differences in frequency-occurrence of four subcategories, and differences in their use of three intellectual strategies: focus, reference to change, and reference to sequence. The low achievers of the two grades differed significantly in frequency-occurrence of three subcategories, which represents difference in use of three intellectual strategies: focus, reference to change, and reference to physical context.

As determined by the six intellectual strategies as analysed in this study, in the writing of fictional biography, there are substantial differences in thinking between high and low achievers of Grade XII; less substantial, but important differences between high and low achievers of Grade IX; only modest differences between high achievers of Grades IX and XII, and between the low achievers of the two grades.

SIX JOURNEYS THROUGH THE WRITING PROCESS

Order No. 8023624

SCHWARTZ, MIMI, ED.D. *Rutgers University The State U. of New Jersey (New Brunswick)*, 1980. 166pp. Chairperson: Janet A. Emig

Writing can be a journey to explore new territories of meaning; or it can be a routine voyage which retravels old routes, noting what has been seen and noted before. The metaphor of the journey is one used by writers, linguists, and psychologists alike to describe how written language can chart the course of our ideas and experience. The kind of journey one takes--towards discovery or routine writing--depends less on mode than on the writer's attitudes and strategies, particularly towards revision. In journeys of discovery, rewriting, as well as initial writing, becomes part of an ongoing process to discover meaning, not just to package it for others.

This study provides a guided tour through six writing journeys to see how writers, young and old, novice and professional, poet and researcher, transform vague notions into full written expression. Using drafts and interviews, I consider these questions: (1) How does each writer find the impetus to begin, select and arrange words and forms, and back out of cul-de-sacs? (2) What common and unique strategies guide the process? (3) What are the implications for writers and for teachers of writing?

A review of the research on composing reveals five factors that affect the chances for discovery: (1) the desire to find meaningful names for experience without relying on cliché (writing as naming); (2) the ability to create new contexts for experience without preconceptions (writing as theory building); (3) the willingness to trust one's intuitive sense of knowing how to guide the process (writing as organic thinking); (4) the ability to deal with the complexities of inner thought without oversimplification (writing as risk-taking); and (5) the willingness to interact with others through readings and conversation.

An internalized supply of words and forms, coupled with a repertoire of revision strategies, aid writers in their search for full expression. Among the most important strategies are overwriting, fusion, borrowing, and pursuing afterthoughts, all of which provide a flexibility needed to find and arrange words and forms, until order emerges. Confidence, patience, and optimism are also needed: to risk exploring the complexities of unstructured thought, until key insights occur, often late as well as early in the process. Writers with a limited supply of language and revision skills are more likely to need help in completing such journeys. Yet, they, too, can succeed, if interactions with others through oral and written exchanges before and during the stages of writing provide the encouragement and perspective to go on.

In conclusion, the findings of this study suggest that writers can embark on and complete journeys in discovery, when (1) the initial writing sparks an interest to explore more, (2) there is a sufficient skeleton of meaning in early drafts to make the writer optimistic about continuing, (3) time is built into the process to allow for insights late in the search, and (4) outside help is available, as needed, to define and to extend the initial borders of meaning found in early drafts. Given these conditions, writers will risk leaving the worn paths of restatement to journey in discovery in poetry or prose.

AN EXPLORATORY STUDY OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN READING RESPONSE AND SYNTACTIC WRITING MATURITY

Order No. 8025960

SIMON, PATRICIA ELLEN, PH.D. *Washington State University*, 1980. 88pp. Chairperson: Gerald H. Maring

Nature of the Study. Both reading and writing are language processes utilizing complex cognitive skills. This study examined the relationship between two specific aspects of reading and writing, namely, the relationship between reading response and syntactic writing maturity. Reading response was defined in four main categories of engagement-involvement, perception, interpretation, and evaluation, and 20 subcategories. Syntactic writing maturity was defined by number of words per terminal clause unit (t-unit). The study was designed to determine whether there was a difference in the types of reading responses made by students measured high in syntactic writing maturity and students measured low in syntactic writing maturity.

Procedures. The subjects were 75 tenth-grade students from a public high school in Spokane, Washington. In order to hold language aptitude constant, only those students whose scores on the verbal reasoning subtest of the Differential Aptitude Test fell between the 40th and 65th percentile range were selected for the study. In November 1979 these students were asked to respond to the reading response measures and to write a 400 word essay in response to a given stimulus.

The reading response measures consisted of the Response Preference Test which measured the preferred responses of students to two short stories and a questionnaire about literature in general and the Transfer Test which measured the reader's amount of transfer from reading to non-reading experiences.

Using words per t-unit as an index of syntactic maturity, the writing samples were analyzed and a range of word per t-unit scores was obtained. Twenty-eight students whose scores fell in the upper 40% range comprised the high syntactic writing maturity group and 28 students whose scores fell in the lower 40% range comprised the low syntactic writing maturity group. The high and low groups were then compared for response preferences and amount of transfer.

A chi-square analysis was used to determine whether there were significant differences in the response categories chosen by students in the high syntactic maturity group and students in the low syntactic maturity group. In addition, a two-tailed *t* test was used to determine if there was a significant difference in the amount of transfer from reading to non-reading experiences between the two groups. A subjective analysis of 20 subcategories contained within the four main categories of response was utilized to discriminate further the differences in response preferences and response patterns of the two groups.

Findings. Results of the chi-square analyses showed significant differences in the categories of response chosen by subjects in the high syntactic writing maturity group and subjects in the low syntactic writing maturity group. There were no significant differences between the two groups on the amount of transfer from reading to non-reading experiences. The subjective analysis by subcategory revealed a pattern of preference for responses in the interpretation category for the high syntactic writing maturity group.

Conclusions. It can be concluded from this study that there is an association between specific types of reading response and syntactic writing ability when response is defined in four categories of engagement-involvement, perception, interpretation, and evaluation. For these subjects, syntactic writing maturity and reading response preferences were not independent of each other.

THE EFFECT OF WRITTEN DIALOGUE AND THE LOCATION OF THE DEEP SUBJECT ON THE READING COMPREHENSION OF SEVEN- AND NINE-YEAR-OLD CHILDREN

Order No. 8028002

SMITH, MARY LEVI, ED.D. *University of Kentucky*, 1980. 96pp. Director: Dr. Phil L. Nacke

The purpose of this study was to investigate the effect of written dialogue and the location of the deep subject on the reading comprehension of seven- and nine-year-old children. The specific research questions raised were: (1) Is the reading comprehension performance of seven- and nine-year-old children when reading passages containing dialogue different from their comprehension of passages containing no dialogue? (2) Is there a difference in the reading comprehension of seven- and nine-year-old children when the deep subject is placed at the beginning of sentences, at the end of sentences or omitted from the surface structure of sentence in discourse? (3) Does the reading comprehension of seven-year-old children differ from the reading comprehension of nine-year-old children when reading passages containing dialogue and passages containing no dialogue?

Both dialogue and no-dialogue passages were developed using the same message content. Within each of the dialogue and no-dialogue passages, a target sentence was placed. The target sentence contained the deep subject in one of three locations: at the beginning of the sentence, at the end of the sentence or omitted from the surface structure. There was a total of 36 passage forms with 6 different messages.

Thirty children who were seven-year-olds and thirty children who were nine-year-olds were randomly selected to read six passages. Each child read three passages containing dialogue and three passages containing no dialogue. Within each of the three dialogue and no-dialogue passages, the deep subject was placed in a target sentence. Therefore, each child read one of each of the following combinations: no-dialogue, deep subject at the beginning of the sentence; no-dialogue, deep subject at the end; no-dialogue, deep subject omitted from the surface structure; dialogue, deep subject at the beginning; dialogue, deep subject at the end; and dialogue, deep subject omitted from the surface structure.

The results of this study indicate that children's comprehension was best when reading no-dialogue with the deep subject at the beginning of sentences. When the deep subject was placed at the end of sentences or omitted from the surface structure, comprehension was better for the dialogue passages. Both seven- and nine-year-old children performed better in reading comprehension when the deep subject was explicitly stated at the beginning of sentences. Comprehension declined when the deep subject was at the end of sentences, and declined further when the deep subject was omitted from the surface structure. Nine-year-old children performed better than seven-year-old children on all structures investigated in this study indicating a developmental difference.

The implications of this study are that teachers should be aware of the fact that children who enter first grade may not comprehend the deep subject when it is not explicitly stated at the beginning of sentences. Beginning reading materials should be evaluated for potential difficulty in comprehension of the deep subject. Authors of beginning reading materials for children should avoid using sentences in which the deep subject is not explicitly stated. Teachers may need to provide appropriate instruction for comprehending messages in which the deep subject is either at the end of sentences or omitted.

THE APPLICATION AND EVALUATION OF A SEQUENTIAL INSTRUCTIONAL DEVELOPMENT MODEL AS APPLIED TO THE AREA OF WRITTEN COMPOSITION

Order No. 8027112

WALKER, WALLACE GARY, PH.D. *Georgia State University - College of Education*, 1980. 150pp.

Purpose. The purpose of this study was to apply and evaluate a sequential instructional development model in the area of written composition. The model was designed from the literature in the field and applied in the creation of a planned sequence of learning activities entitled "Creating a Super Hero." An evaluation of the material developed by the use of the model was conducted to determine whether students using the material developed from the model differed significantly from students who had not received the treatment as measured by a modified Diederich Writing Assessment Scale.

Methods and Procedures. It was hypothesized that the mean scores on the modified Diederich Writing Assessment Scale for each of the categories of total score, ideas and organization for experimental and control groups would not differ significantly at the .05 level. Subhypotheses stated that the mean scores of each category would not differ significantly at each grade level.

This study used an experimental design with two randomly assigned groups in a posttest only design. The subjects consisted of 280 fifth, sixth and seventh grade students. Subjects were organized into an experimental group with 174 students and a control group with 106 students. The experimental group used the instructional material, "Creating a Super Hero," under the direction of the classroom teacher. Students in the control group received instruction using the materials regularly used in the classes.

On completion of the use of the material by the experimental group, a writing sample on the same topic was obtained from students in the experimental and control groups. A trained rater read and scored each writing sample using a modified Diederich Writing Assessment Scale.

The mean scores of the experimental and control groups on the total writing score and the ratings on the ideas and organization components of the scale were analyzed. The data were analyzed by two-factor analyses of variance and t-tests for independent means.

Results. The major results of the study included: (1) A significant difference existed between the two total groups on each of three major hypotheses at the .05 level of significance. (2) No significant difference existed between the two groups on each of the six subhypotheses concerned with fifth and sixth grade students. (3) A significant difference at the .001 level existed between the two groups on each of the three subhypotheses concerned with seventh grade students.

Conclusions. The conclusions based on the results of this study included the following: (1) A significant difference in total writing scores was indicated between students using instructional material developed according to a sequential instructional development model and students using regular textbook instructional materials as measured by a modified Diederich Writing Assessment Scale. (2) A significant difference in total organization scores was indicated between students using instructional material developed according to a sequential instructional development model and students using regular textbook instructional materials as measured by a modified Diederich Writing Assessment Scale. (3) A significant difference in total idea scores was indicated between students using instructional material developed according to a sequential instructional development model and students using regular textbook instructional materials as measured by a modified Diederich Writing Assessment Scale.

THE EFFECTS OF MATURITY AND DISCOURSE TYPE ON THE WRITTEN SYNTAX OF SUPERIOR HIGH SCHOOL SENIORS AND UPPER LEVEL COLLEGE ENGLISH MAJORS

Order No. 8016259

WATSON, CYNTHIA, PH.D. *State University of New York at Buffalo*, 1980. 249pp.

Until the early 1970's, composition researchers, bent on measuring syntactic maturity, have largely ignored the possibility that written syntax might vary for more than one reason. Because syntactic research has traditionally focused on maturity differences--or syntactic growth--collection of writing samples has not, as a rule, taken into consideration the rhetorical constraints which discourse theory tells us are operant in all communication. In this study I have hypothesized that syntactic variations due to changes in these rhetorical constraints--specifically, shifts in purpose--are just as dramatic as those well-documented syntactic differences between younger and older writers.

A total of 42 superior student writers participated in this study. Twenty-one of these subjects were high school seniors selected from five public and private schools in Western New York. The other 21 superior writers came from among upper division college English majors at the State University of New York at Buffalo. Selection was based on writing quality (primary-trait scoring, Lloyd-Jones, 1977), I.Q., and grade-point average.

All subjects wrote a total of 12 essays over a period of 14 weeks. These essays were written in response to 12 writing tasks which systematically shifted rhetorical purpose from self-expression to persuasion to explanation, thus creating three purpose-defined discourse categories. Measuring syntactic differences among these three categories and between the two maturity levels has been the primary purpose of this study.

The first 15 T-units (Hunt, 1965) of every essay were hand scored for the occurrences of 17 syntactic features culled from current composition research findings. After syntactic analysis, the data were subjected to one-way univariate and multivariate repeated measures analysis of variance. The single categorical independent variable was maturity level. The 17 measured dependent variables represented the 17 syntactic features. A repeated measures format was employed in the statistical analysis of each discourse type. Research hypotheses were tested for significance at the .05 level.

The results of my study supported my general hypothesis, revealing significant syntactic differences among discourse types--differences which equalled or exceeded differences between the two maturity levels. Particularly striking were the differences between expressive and persuasive syntax within both maturity levels. By traditional syntactic maturity standards, this expressive syntax would be considered "less mature" than the persuasive syntax produced by the selfsame subjects.

Clearly, shifts in the purpose of a piece of writing are accompanied by consistent and measurable syntactic changes. The notion of syntactic *maturity* must be augmented by a new understanding of syntactic *variation* which has little or nothing to do with the writer's age.

This study, being both a test of discourse theory and an effort at basic description, has achieved three major ends. First, it has produced empirical evidence to support theoretical claims that rhetorical constraints leave their imprint on written communication. Secondly, It has controlled for both maturity level and discourse type, allowing a comparative measurement of the two variables within a single study. Finally, the syntactic description and comparison has added to the growing body of empirically gathered knowledge about actual student performance--knowledge much needed by composition instructors engaged in the classroom business of prescription.

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